



*A publication of the RSC Sunset Caucus from co-chairs Kevin Brady (R-TX) and Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)
Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH), RSC Chairman*

Eliminate the Commemorative Coin Reallocations

November 15, 2012

Program or Item Targeted: Commemorative Coin Bill Disbursements to Organizations

Cost of Program or Item: Reallocating “surcharge” proceeds to the Treasury could cut the deficit by approximately \$7 million per bill.

Background on Program or Item to Be Sunsetting: Congress commissions commemorative coins, which are minted to commemorate a particular event, issue, organization, or person. The coins are sold by the government, and the proceeds of “surcharges” are sent to specific groups and organizations specified by the authorizing legislation. The surcharges can total millions of dollars per bill, and the U.S. Mint reports they have raised more than \$418 million since 1982.

Why This Program or Item Is Wasteful: The federal government should not be, in effect, choosing particular organizations for which to fundraise. Some organizations regard the practice as constituting a loophole in the earmark ban, choosing certain groups to fund in a roundabout way; whether or not one accepts this argument, the point is clear that the practice singles out and helps to financially assist certain private entities rather than others. Especially with a budget deficit and a rapidly mounting debt, the federal government should not be raising and reallocating money for private entities like this. If the government is going to produce these coins and raise the funds at all, the money should be used to reduce the deficit.

MEMBER ACTION ITEM: Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI) has introduced H.R. 6495, the Commemorative Coin Reform Act, and Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC) introduced companion legislation in the Senate. This legislation would not ban commemorative coins, but would require surcharge revenue from newly authorized commemorative coins to be deposited in the U.S. Treasury for deficit reduction. Some conservatives have alternatively suggested eliminating the commemorative coins bills altogether. For more information on H.R. 6495 or to cosponsor, please contact Kurt Couchman at Kurt.Couchman@mail.house.gov, and for more information about this and other Sunset Caucus measures, please contact Rick.Eberstadt@mail.house.gov.

If you would like to participate in eliminating wasteful programs with the RSC Sunset Caucus, please e-mail Rick.Eberstadt@mail.house.gov.

Note: Not every item featured in the Waste Action Alerts is necessarily endorsed by the RSC. These Alerts highlight the individual initiatives of members of the RSC Sunset Caucus.

*“The RSC Sunset Caucus uncovers government waste and seeks to eliminate it,
working to sunset programs that taxpayers shouldn’t be paying for.”*

